

Testimony in support of Senate Bill 38

Mark C. Gentile, President

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Room 1E, Legislative Office Building

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Good Morning.

My name is Mark Gentile and I am the President of Certified Ambulance Group. Certified Ambulance Group represents 34 ambulance providers in the State of Connecticut and I am here to support Senate Bill 38 on their behalf.

In a medical emergency time is critical. Emergencies don't always happen close to the appropriate medical facility. A woman involved in a motor vehicle accident in the Litchfield County will have to be transported to Hartford to receive care at a Level 1 Trauma Center. A pre-mature infant born in Manchester can be better cared for in Farmington. A man with severe cardiac problems may have to be transferred to New Haven from the Naugatuck Valley. Many times these emergency transports between rural hospitals to more definitive care in major medical facilities require the use of specialized treatments and equipment provided by Doctors, Nurse Practitioners or Advanced Paramedics. These transports are known as "Specialty Care Transports" and are vital in the preservation of life for these patients in need.

If the weather is cooperating some of these patients can be transported by helicopter but as we all know the weather in New England does not always cooperate. The federal Medicare program, the Department of Social Service's Medicaid program and the private insurance industry recognize and pay for transportation costs associated with aero medical transportation. However, if this patient has to go by ground ambulance utilizing much of the same equipment and personnel, the Department of Social Services does not recognize this level of care. Senate Bill 38 would allow the Department of Social

Services to recognize and pay for these ground ambulance services as they do for the air medical industry.

While we understand that these are hard economic time for the State of Connecticut, it must also be understood that the financial situation is not just confined to the State. EMS Providers are not looking for any funding that is not already recognized by the State Department of Health. "Specialty Care Transport" is one of the assigned rates established by the Department of Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services. The Department of Social Services simply needs to acknowledge this State approved rate and establish a payment schedule for these services.

Much of the population of the State of Connecticut is covered if they need to be transported to another hospital for state-of-the-art care. Our elderly and insured citizens benefit by having coverage for these transports. Our populace that relies on the Connecticut Medicaid program deserves the same consideration. I ask that you support Senate Bill 38 and the EMS Agencies providing this care.

Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.